

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 05618 112054Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
AID-05 PC-01 IO-13 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00
DOE-15 SOE-02 ACDA-12 NRC-05 OES-07 /133 W
-----087308 121258Z /43

R 111217Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0825
INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 5618

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, IN
SUBJECT: MRS. GANDHI ON FOREIGN CONSPIRACIES:
AN OLD SONG WITH A FASTER BEAT

REF: (A) NEW DELHI 5540; (B) NEW DELHI 3201

1. FORMER PRIME MINISTER GANDHI HAS MAINTAINED A HIGH LEVEL
OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY SINCE HER APPEARANCE IN KARNAL ON THE
EVE OF THE IMPORTANT BY-ELECTION THERE. SHE HAS BEEN BARN-
STORMING AGGRESSIVELY IN JANATA COUNTRY, RAKING THE RULING
PARTY OVER FAMILIAR COALS IN A SERIES OF MASS RALLIES, PARTY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 05618 112054Z

MEETINGS, AND PRESS CONFERENCES IN JAMMU, PUNJAB, RAJASTHAN,
UTTAR PRADESH AND BIHAR. SHE HAS REPORTEDLY BEEN DRAWING
IMPRESSIVE CROWDS. HER MASS MEETING IN PATNA, LAST STOP ON
HER CURRENT SWING, IS SAID TO HAVE ATTRACTED ONE OF THE LARG-
EST TURNOUTS EVER TO ASSEMBLE IN THE BIHAR CAPITAL.

2. MUCH OF WHAT MRS. GANDHI HAS BEEN TELLING HER LISTENERS

IS VINTAGE STUFF TO INDIRA WATCHERS. OF MORE THAN PASSING
NOTE IN

THE CONTEXT OF US INTERESTS IN THIS REGION HAVE
BEEN SOME OF HER REPORTED COMMENTS ON FOREIGN AND NUCLEAR
AFFAIRS. THESE HAVE INCLUDED ALLEGATIONS THAT:

--THE 1977 CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT IN INDIA WAS THE MANIFESTA-
TION OF A DEEP-ROOTED CONSPIRACY BY SOME FOREIGN POWERS.
THESE FORCES WERE ACTIVE LONG BEFORE SHE BECAME PRIME MINIS-
TER. SHE HAD EVEN BEEN TOLD BY A FORMER CHIEF MINISTER THAT
A SENIOR DIPLOMAT HAD CALLED ON HIM AT THE TIME OF HER ELEC-
TION AS LEADER OF THE CONGRESS PARTY IN 1966 TO URGE HIM TO
SUPPORT MORARJI DESAI'S UNSUCCESSFUL BID. (MRS. GANDHI
DID NOT NAME ANY COUNTRY, BUT WE DON'T DOUBT THAT HER LISTEN-
ERS AND NEWSPAPERS READERS WILL ASSUME THAT THE US WAS IN-
VOLVED.)

-- IT WAS NOT A COINCIDENCE THAT GOVERNMENTS IN ALL REGIONAL
COUNTRIES WERE CHANGED ALMOST AT THE SAME TIME.

-- MULTINATIONALS WERE GETTING THE UPPER HAND. COCA COLA WAS
ONLY A SMALL MULTINATIONAL COMPANY, BUT THE GOVERNMENT WAS
NOW COOPERATING WITH MULTINATIONALS FOR BIG STEEL MILLS. SUCH
TRENDS WERE DANGEROUS. "HAD HITLER NOT BEEN HELPED BY THE
MULTINATIONALS OF VARIOUS COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THOSE OF
THE USA, HE WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DO WHAT HE DID DURING
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 05618 112054Z

WORLD WAR II." (THIS QUOTE, FROM THE TIMES OF INDIA'S PATNA
CORRESPONDENT, GIVES SOME OF THE PECULIAR FLAVOR OF MRS.
GANDHI'S RHETORIC.)

-- THE ATOMIC RESEARCH TEAM WHICH HAD EXPERIMENTED WITH PEACE-
FUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS WAS NOW BEING DISPERSED (EVIDENTLY A
REFERENCE TO THE TRANSFER OF R. RAMANNA, THE DIRECTOR OF THE
BHABHA ATOMIC RESEARCH CENTER.) PUBLIC SECTOR UNITS WERE
BEING IGNORED WHICH WOULD TELL UPON DEFENSE PRODUCTION.

-- IT WAS HER GOVERNMENT THAT HAD SOWN THE SEEDS OF FRIEND-
SHIP WITH THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. BUT MANY OF THE TREAT-
IES SIGNED BY THE JANATA GOVERNMENT WERE NOT IN KEEPING WITH
THE INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY.

3. MRS. GANDHI'S ALLEGATIONS, SO TYPICAL OF THE FORMER PM'S
AGGRESSIVE STYLE, TAKE ON NEW IMPORTANCE NOW THAT SHE IS PACK-
ING, AND SEEN TO BE PACKING, INCREASING POLITICAL MUSCLE. WE
CONSIDER IT SIGNIFICANT THAT FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE FELT
CONSTRAINED BY THE LAST OF THESE ALLEGATIONS TO COUNTERATTACK
BY RAISING THE OLD CHARGE OF A GANDHI-BHUTTO DEAL AT SIMLA,
HARDLY A HELPFUL MOVE ON THE EVE OF THE AGHA SHAHI VISIT TO

INDIA (REF A). (AN MEA SPOKESMAN LATER DODGED NEWSMEN'S QUESTIONS ABOUT THE VAJPAYEE ALLEGATION.)

4. SUCH COUNTERCHANGES WILL NOT WILL NOT DETER MRS. GANDHI, WHO CAN BE COUNTED ON TO CONTINUE TO RAISE ALLEGATIONS, HOWEVER FLIMSY, IF THEY SEEM TO HER TO MEET HER IMMEDIATE DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES. AS WE HAD SUGGESTED EARLIER (REF B) WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT FROM THE USG'S VIEWPOINT IS THAT IN THE FACE OF MRS. GANDHI'S DETERMINED OFFENSIVE THE GOVERNMENT IS LIKELY TO RECALCULATE HOW MUCH FREEDOM OF ACTION IT HAS, AND WHAT POLITICAL RISKS IT WISHES TO TAKE.

5. MEANWHILE, THE INDIAN EXPRESS REPORTS THIS MORNING, APRIL 11, THAT MRS. GANDHI HAS WRITTEN TO THE FOREIGN MINISTERS. CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 NEW DE 05618 112054Z

TER FOR A PASSPORT TO VISIT THE US. ACCORDING TO THE EXPRESS, SHE SAID IN THE LETTER THAT SHE WISHES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERNATIONAL DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE SCHEDULED TO BE HELD IN PITTSBURGH IN MAY. THE REPORT HAS IT THAT VAJPAYEE IS WILLING TO GIVE HER THE PASSPORT, BUT THAT PRIME MINISTER DESAI AND HOME MINISTER CHARAN SINGH OPPOSE THIS.

6. THE MEA SPOKESMAN IS LIKELY TO BE ASKED ABOUT MRS. GANDHI'S REPORTED OVERSEAS TRAVEL INTERESTS IN THIS EVENING'S BRIEFING AND WE WILL BE PASSING ON WHATEVER FURTHER INFORMATION WE CAN DEVELOP ABOUT IT. (AND, IF MRS. GANDHI DOES INDEED WANT TO GO AND IS ALLOWED TO DO SO, WE'LL HAVE RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT HOW WE SHOULD HANDLE THE VISIT.)
GOHEEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, POLITICAL STABILITY, SPEECHES, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NEWDE05618
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780157-0388
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780470/aaaachpr.tel
Line Count: 150
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bd9bf0b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 NEW DELHI 5540, 78 NEW DELHI 3201
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3009966
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MRS. GANDHI ON FOREIGN CONSPIRACIES: AN OLD SONG WITH A FASTER BEAT
TAGS: PGOV, IN, (GANDHI, INDIRA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bd9bf0b2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014